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CALVIN NEWTON, M. D., EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

*"Seize upon truth wherever found,
On Christian or on Heathen ground."*

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NO. I.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

We again greet our friends with the usual wish of "a happy new year;" and, while we thus assert the benevolence of our intentions, we hope to receive, at an early date, from many of our readers, *some special evidences* of their individual interest in our enterprise. We presume it will not require a large share of logical talent to convince most persons, that a dollar forthwith received from each of our subscribers will constitute a new year's offering acceptable to an editor who has regularly to pay his printer fifty dollars per month for that portion of the labor of publication which devolves on him. It will be borne in mind, that we have no means *of visiting California*, at this time, and, therefore, we must depend on our *patrons for gold* or some other *circulating medium* to supply our necessities.

Hitherto, we have been accustomed to send individual receipts to those, the price of whose subscriptions we receive. We have now arranged with our printer to publish, on the cover of the Journal, all receipts *for the present volume*. We had intended to send this volume to no one who should not pay *in advance*; but, as, *in these hard times*, many will be glad to take the paper, if they can have a little indulgence, we have concluded to grant that indulgence;—the delinquents, of course, bearing in mind, that a delay of three months will increase the price to \$1.25;—and of six months, to \$1.50.

Will our friends assist us, not only by the payment of their own sub-

scriptions in advance, but by procuring us additional subscribers? We look for—we expect their hearty and vigorous cooperation. [Ed. Jour.]

OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE BOWELS.

PROF. NEWTON:—*Dear Sir*,—I have frequently met with severe cases of constipation of the bowels, in my practice, which have required the most energetic treatment. And, by your permission, I subjoin the report of one or two such cases, which, some time since, came under my care; not so much, however, for the purpose of instructing your readers, as for requesting *them* to point out, if possible, a more satisfactory and judicious plan of medication.

Sept. 15th, 1847. I was requested to visit H. D., a stout young man, aged twenty-one, of rather a nervous bilious temperament. He had been under *regular* treatment for a fortnight previous, for inflammatory rheumatism, in an adjoining town, and had so far recovered as to be able to come here on a visit to some friends, on the 15th. The day was rather cold, and he had rode six or eight miles insufficiently clad; and, on arriving, had eaten a hearty dinner,—about an hour after which he began to complain of severe pain in the epigastric region, which continued to increase till I was called. When I arrived, I found the patient as I have described him, from whom I elicited the facts above stated. His tongue was clean and moist, his pulse perfectly regular, and not exceeding sixty beats per minute; and no increase of the pain on pressure's being applied; his countenance indicative of extreme suffering; and occasional low muttering delirium.

From these symptoms, which I have briefly narrated, I inferred, that, to the quality or quantity of ingesta, or both, was to be attributed the offending cause; and, hence, I at once administered an emetic of lobelia inflata with the usual accompaniments, which thoroughly evacuated the stomach, and afforded almost immediate relief. This, however, was of short duration; for I was again summoned, in the course of the night, and found the patient laboring under all the symptoms previously described,—the seat of the pain being referred to a point about the breadth of the hand lower than at the first attack. I prepared, and administered, as speedily as possible, an injection made stimulating with hot drops; one or two repetitions of which again completely relieved the patient. Feeling confident that injections would relieve him more speedily than almost any other agent, I gave directions to have them administered as often as the pain came on. Mild physic, as oil &c., was also ordered with the view to aid the syringe in liberating the bowels.

This course of treatment was continued till the 22d; during which time many expedients were resorted to for relieving the patient of his extreme suffering. At one time an emetic would afford relief; at another an injection. At others the vapor bath, hot fomentations, and even the wet sheet were resorted to, but all with the same result,—mere temporary re-

relief from or mitigation of the alarming symptoms. The pain descended gradually in the abdomen, until its seat became fixed in the right inguinal region, where a small tumor or swelling presented itself,—without, however, any other symptoms of hernia. Feeling *anxious*, to say the least, about the termination of this case, I requested the friends to call in Dr. E. Wales, one of the most liberal, honorable, and skilful old school physicians in this vicinity. He recommended no change of treatment—said that injections, together with mild physic, would afford the patient the greatest chance for his life.

Soon after this I was again summoned in haste, and informed that injections could no longer be given. The young man was in the greatest possible agony—his groans and screeches being heard at considerable distance all over the neighborhood. His bowels were much swollen, though there was but little tenderness,—tongue slightly coated, and pulse very little accelerated. On attempting to administer an injection, I found to my surprise, that I could no more accomplish the feat than could those who had failed before me. The pipe could be introduced without difficulty, but no force was sufficient to move the piston. A few fruitless attempts were made to introduce the injection, and the syringe was abandoned for a time. The bowels seemed to have been forced down before the obstruction, whatever it might be, literally filling and obstructing the rectum. The symptoms becoming more and more alarming, Dr. L. Goodnow of Quincy, a brother Botanist, who has gained for himself considerable notoriety in this region, and an esteemed friend and fellow student, by the way, was called. Before his arrival, however, I had again succeeded in relieving the patient, so that a more favorable opportunity was offered for making a careful examination.

A large sized gum elastic catheter was, with much difficulty introduced into the rectum five or six inches, and, on being withdrawn, it presented the appearance of having been tightly drawn over the edge of some sharp hard substance. Here, then, seemed to be one point of obstruction; for, beyond this, the passage was clear for a considerable distance, as the subsequent treatment proved.

The pipe of a syringe was then fitted into this catheter; which was again introduced, and through this injections were afterwards administered without difficulty. This, for a while, relieved the patient. Soon, however, other difficulties arose, which, if possible, were more perplexing than those I had previously encountered. Injections could, by means of this catheter, be introduced, but none could be found efficacious enough to afford *even temporary* respite to the awful suffering; *nor was it in the power of the patient to discharge them*. There seemed to be a fold of intestine which, operating like a valve, would admit the introduction of injections, but close sufficiently regularly and securely to prevent their discharge. The patient was every hour growing worse,—his bowels swollen almost to bursting and tympanitic, the ribs and sternum pushed out, breathing short and laborious, frequent spasms, cold sweat, stercoraceous vomiting, &c., &c.

Thus things went on from bad to worse, and from worse to desperate, till the evening of the 25th,—ten days from the first attack;—during which time I made trial of almost everything officinal with our fraternity,

as well as many *expedients* which could hardly be regarded as officinal, but all to little or no purpose. For the last twelve hours, I had persevered against the expressed wishes of the patient and his friends; for they believed that death was inevitable, and that further medication was altogether useless. But I was determined to persevere.

Being nearly worn down with professional duties, I found it necessary to leave the patient, for a few hours at least, for the purpose of procuring rest; and, as I left, I administered *four* pills, composed of equal parts of jalap, scammony, and gamboge, and gave directions to have two more administered every hour. This may seem like rather a strange prescription for a Thomsonian to make,—particularly to some of our *no-physic* doctors; and, I have only to say, in justification, show me a better plan, and I will most cheerfully adopt it.

On my return, a few hours afterwards, the bowels had moved powerfully, and continued, for the next twenty-four hours, to discharge the most disgusting stools imaginable. The bowels soon became soft and free from pain. The patient was, in a few days, convalescent; and, in a few weeks, was able to resume his occupation, in the full enjoyment of his usual most excellent health. I regret that I had no opportunity of examining the first discharges from his bowels, as I have no doubt, from the description, they must have contained some exceedingly hard scybala.

Since the above occurred, I have had numerous cases, none of which, however, have proved quite so obstinate; and a similar course of treatment has succeeded, in every instance, when persevered in. Some have not required very powerful cathartics, and in some they have been wholly dispensed with. One case, however, that of a child, which had been induced by a purgative, proved fatal, under the following circumstances. I had twice, on previous occasions, been called to this child, who, at best, was a feeble thing, and whose bowels had been injured by an over dose of senna; and by giving an emetic, injections, &c., I had relieved it. On the third attack, which came on a week or two afterwards, the same course of treatment failed to move the bowels, though it relieved the pain for a time. The father urged me to give powerful physic—"something that would go right through him." I objected to this course, as highly dangerous and empirical; and proposed, as the safest and most judicious course, to persevere with injections, giving *mild physic*, &c. I thought the constitution of the child would not bear powerful physic, and, that, if it should, perchance, remove the obstruction, the child must die afterwards from the shock and debilitating effects of the purge. The parents thought differently; and, as I *refused* to give *powerful physic*, I was discharged, and an old-school doctor was called. He prescribed his herculean remedies, and in a short time the child was no more. No movement of the bowels was procured. Here, then, is a case, an offset to the former one, in which, in my opinion, physic was the proximate cause of death.

A sufficiently mild and judicious course of treatment, I have no doubt, would have saved this child. Now, if these two cases are facts, and the deductions drawn from them are philosophical, is it not evident, that sound judgment and discrimination, on the part of the practitioner, should dictate the means to be used in the treatment? Would it not be

preposterous to say, that such cases admit of the routine treatment by purgatives, or by injections, emetics, &c.

I sometimes find, that a mere *change* of remedies, or perhaps a change in the manner of administering them, has a wonderful effect, though the change is, as we should naturally suppose, from a superior to an inferior remedy. Hence, variations in the treatment of diseases are not only judicious, but necessary and highly important. We should not, it is true, make our changes empirically. We should carefully study constitutional peculiarities, as well as the *exigencies* of the case. In a word, *the means*, be they what they may, should be adapted to *the end*.

Randolph, Mass., Dec., 1848.

E. A. ALLEN.

From Water-Cure for Ladies.

TOBACCO.

As society advances in what is popularly called temperance, the narcotic stimulant, tobacco, is more freely used. This is at least partly owing to the fact, that true temperance is not generally understood. An increased quantity of tobacco is very often used by those who discontinue strong drink. Those who use alcoholic drinks, generally are in the habit of stimulating by tobacco. In the present state of physiological knowledge, it could not be otherwise, than that stimulation by tobacco should be, in a measure, substituted for that by alcohol. With those who understand the subject, it is nothing more than was expected and predicted, that such increase should take place. Accordingly, in the short space of three years, in New-England, where so much attention has been given to temperance, by the Washingtonians and others, the use of tobacco has increased in proportion, tenfold. This state of things is one most lamentable. It is not merely the bad effect of the tobacco that is to be feared. It indicates to the true physiologist this much—that, if temperance people do not learn to reject stimulation throughout, the interest in the cause will, with inevitable certainty, sooner or later, be in a great measure lost, and many will again return to their strong drink.

Tobacco is believed by many to be really useful as a remedy. In those cases where it is used to prevent gastric disturbance, and to “keep the food on the stomach,” it would be better to avoid the *causes* of those symptoms. It sometimes *apparently* benefits the individual for the time, but the effect on the whole is injurious. It is constantly bringing about a state of things in the system, which infallibly increases the difficulties. For the good effects proposed, there are other and better means.

Tobacco is a very powerful acrid narcotic poison. It requires but a small quantity to produce immediate death. This has been often proved. Fatal results have not unfrequently taken place by its medicinal use. In view of this fact, medical men are extremely cautious how they use it. A very small quantity, in infusion, passed into the bowels to relax the system, has been known to prove fatal. In extreme cases, it is used only as a last resort before surgical operations.

Those who use it to any considerable extent, are certain of experiencing a manifest weakness of nerves, and often a trembling, which is exceedingly troublesome and inconvenient. We know different persons who are thus afflicted: one in particular, a very robust, strong man, whose habits are extremely active in the open air, at all seasons of the year, and yet, notwithstanding the great strength of constitution and nerve, his hand has, by the use of tobacco, at last become so tremulous that he can scarcely convey food to his mouth. His teeth also have been so softened by its long use that they are literally worn to the gums.

Tobacco will sometimes cure the tooth-ache. But in such cases there are better means to be used; and better than use the tobacco, would it be to bear the ache, and reject the poison. It is altogether, in every form, injurious.

From Water-Cure for Ladies.

OPIUM.

Most unfortunately for the human race, this deadly drug, also, is becoming more and more used. Its preparations are largely manufactured, and at rates that place it within the reach of all. Not so rapidly as tobacco, but for the same reason, is the use of this drug increasing in society. Among females it is the cause of immense misery. Morphine is the preparation in which it is most used. There is great deception in the effects produced by opium. In many cases, severe pain can be speedily removed, and there is also experienced a pleasant stimulation, and sleep often follows its use, when it could not otherwise be obtained. Such results are strikingly calculated to mislead the unthinking; for who would think of looking beyond the immediate effects produced? If pain is removed, such evidence is sufficient. Those who choose to note the after-effects can have little trouble in satisfying themselves of the pernicious effects of this drug. It should never be used, for there are means more effectual, and entirely safe, by which to reduce pain.

The following very serious cases happened in the practice of the late Dr. Physic of Philadelphia. They are thus given by Dr. Randolph: "Two children, twin brothers, at the age of three months, were thrown into a state of complete stupor, from whence they could not be aroused, from having been given by the mother each a drop of laudanum, to allay the restlessness from hooping-cough. The vial from which the laudanum was taken had been left uncorked, so that a quantity of the article had almost wholly evaporated, and the mother was able to obtain for the one a single drop, while for the other she added two drops of water, stirring it about, which she administered. The poor mother was entirely ignorant of the immense additional strength thus gained by the evaporation which had taken place. The children had both been in convulsions. The emetic prescribed could not be given, as the children were incapable of swallowing. Their countenances had become livid, breathing laborious, and the pulsations had almost entirely ceased. By a variety of

means the children were, however, both restored; the principal of which was to pass a flexible tube down the œsophagus, to the stomach, and thus, by the use of a common syringe, the stomachs were completely washed out. This operation, so simple and easy, once known, and so effectual, was well worthy the distinguished man. It had never, to his knowledge, been performed previously. As a result, one of the children was saved—the other died the next morning. Such an instrument (syringe and stomach tube) should be in every house, and can be obtained at a small expense.

THE RIGHT SPIRIT.

PROF. C. NEWTON:—I have received the New England Botanic Medical and Surgical Journal, and am much pleased with the same. I suppose Dr. Bassett must have informed you, that I wished to take the paper formerly edited by himself. It was unknown to me, that the New York Thomsonian was discontinued; but, soon after my letter to Dr. B. was mailed, Dr. Thayer of Montrose informed me of its discontinuance. I will hereafter continue to take your Journal, and the money will be forthcoming for the same;—so please *continue*.

I shall try to do something this winter for the extension of the Journal in this place. Six years ago, you could not have found here one individual favorable to the Botanic Practice; but now, more than two-thirds of the township are so, notwithstanding we have five Allopathic physicians in the place. We have had the bilious remittant fever here this fall,—the regulars have lost many; but not one has been lost under the Botanic treatment. More than one hundred cases have been cured the present summer, that were said to be incurable by our opposite brotherhood. A considerable portion of these cases were female cases,—debility, amenorrhœa, leucorrhœa, hysteria, chlorosis, incomplete and complete prolapsus uteri, puerperal fever, menorrhagia, ischuria, dysuria, &c. In all of these we have been successful.

Now, sir, to advance our cause, we want more effort among our medical brethren,—good Journals and good supporters in every State. Next, we want good Text Books. They should combine Theory and Practice. We have seen the want of those things in the country, at least every young practitioner has done so, on his establishing himself in business. We want our Journals to give us, if convenient, a catalogue of our best medical authors relating to the Botanic Practice, their cost, &c., and we, in the back ground, will have our libraries replenished occasionally, if the distance is something, or postage high. Will Prof. N. look to this occasionally, and favor his friends at a distance.

I am glad to hear that your efforts pertaining to a College in Worcester, Mass., are so far successful,—that old prejudices are giving way to truth, and you are about to see your work prosper in your hands.

I hope your life may be spared to complete your contemplated Work

on the Theory and Practice of Medicine. It is earnestly looked for, and I pledge myself to take a copy on its publication.

I find, that, although in haste, I am getting prolix, and probably trespassing on your time and patience. Therefore, believe me, sir,

Yours most respectfully.

Harford. Pa., Nov., 1848.

ELISHA N. LOOMIS.

From Water-Cure for Ladies.

FOOD AND ITS PREPARATIONS.

To those who love plainness, simplicity, and "temperance in all things," and who would desire not to "make the table a snare," a few directions respecting plain food may not prove useless.

Among all writers on health, respecting flesh meat, it is the common statement, that in this country there is by far too much used. It were better taken but once a day, and then in moderate quantity, and of the least objectionable kinds. It is an interesting fact, that writers upon diet and hygiene in general agree that those kinds of flesh meat allowed in the Mosaic dispensation are far more healthy than those which are forbidden. It is most certainly true that the best health of body and mind does not require the use of flesh meat at all. In the Jewish economy, there were many things permitted by divine direction, and this of necessity, which things, in the light of *our* day, in the Christian dispensation, are not allowable. "Moses," says the Savior, "because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." And it was precisely upon this principle, that flesh meat was allowed. We see, therefore, in those ancient regulations, the benevolence of God in thus restricting man to the least hurtful kinds of flesh.

It is often said, that it becomes necessary through long habit to continue flesh-eating. Those who make such assertions do not well understand the physiology and capabilities of the human body. The habit of flesh-eating is nothing as powerful as that of stimulation by alcohol, opium, or tobacco; and yet who ever dies—or rather, who is not bettered, other things being equal, by leaving such habits?

In some part of the world flesh meat is taken in an uncooked state. There is no doubt, that it is to the unaccustomed stomach in this form the best. None but the lean part of flesh should be used. "Ye shall eat no manner of fat; of ox, of sheep, or of goat," we read in scripture.

In killing animals, the Jews, in observance of their ancient laws, "do not stun the animal with blows, producing stagnation and congestion of blood; the throat is cut with a remarkably sharp knife, and all the veins and arteries are emptied; the lungs are searched with the hand; if the liver attaches to the ribs, or there are impurities, malformation, or any apparent disease, it is condemned, and the leaden seals are not attached to the meat. It is thus, that the observance of ancient laws by this ancient people gives them great protection against feeding on diseased animals."

"Most of the animals," says Dr. Graham, "which in modern times are fitted for the slaughter-house and for interment in living sepulchres, are actually in a state of disease when they are killed: and, therefore, shocking as the thought may be, the human stomach, in these days of elegant refinement, and of science and religion, is actually made a kind of 'potter's field' to receive the unknown dead of every disease! Why should we marvel, then, that putrid and malignant, and violent diseases, as well as those of a more chronic character, and less alarming symptoms, but more general prevalence, should so severely scourge the human family, —and especially in civic life!"

The best way of cooking flesh meat is the more ancient one, by suspending it before a fire and turning it until "done." This, however, is not very different from roasting in a large oven. Boiling in pure water is also a very good method. It, however, renders the meat less nourishing, and also less stimulating. Stewing or frying, especially when done in fat, or grease, or butter, is most pernicious. Flesh soups and broths are very objectionable forms of preparation. They are in general too complex, and do not admit of mastication and sufficient insalivation, so important to digestion. If used at all, they should be boiled with much rice, hulled wheat, barley, or something of the kind. It is also far better to take such dishes with a large proportion of bread, and always cool or cold, and with the less of seasonings the better.

Salted fish and flesh are more difficult of digestion than flesh. Many a one gets a severe headache by partaking of such articles. At first, from the stimulation of the salt, there is perhaps a feeling of satisfaction—something "that seems to stand by," as the laborer would say. But such feelings are delusive. If flesh is smoked in addition, it is still worse.

From Dr. Lardner's Lectures.

USES OF THE BAROMETER.

1. *Generally* the rising of the mercury indicates the approach of fair weather; the falling of it shows the approach of foul weather.

2. In sultry weather, the fall of the mercury indicates coming thunder. In winter, the rise of the mercury indicates frost. In frost, its fall indicates thaw; and its rise, indicates snow.

3. Whatever change of weather suddenly follows a change in the barometor, may be expected to last but a short time. Thus, if fair weather follow immediately the rise of the mercury, there will be but very little of it; and, in the same way, if foul weather follow the fall of mercury, it will last but a short time.

4. If fair weather continues for several days, during which the mercury continually falls, a long succession of foul weather will probably ensue; and again, if foul weather continue for several days, while the mercury continually rises, a long succession of fair weather will probably succeed.

5. A fluctuating and unsettled state in the mercurial column indicates changable weather.

The domestic barometer would become a much more useful instrument, if, instead of the words usually engraved on the plate, a short list of the best established rules, such as the above, accompanied it, which might be either engraved on the plate, or printed on a card. It would be right, however, to express the rules only with that degree of probability which observation of past phenomena has justified. There is no rule respecting these effects, which will hold good, with perfect certainty, in every case.

PRAYING DOCTORS, &C.

DR. NEWTON:—*Dear Sir*,—A good deal has been written, by able correspondents, upon various subjects pertaining to the science and practice of medicine, but no one, to my knowledge, has ever written any thing upon the subject of "Praying Doctors," or prayers in the sick room.

Now, if it really is, as some contend, absolutely essential, in order for medicine to have its legitimate effect upon the human constitution, that the physician officiate in this capacity, then it is an indispensable branch of physiology, and a portion of the doctor's time and attention should be appropriated to this branch. And, if it be true, that, by a faithful discharge of this office, we conduce to the health and happiness of the sick, the community ought to be apprised of the fact, and physicians ought to prepare themselves accordingly to discharge this important trust.

But, if, instead of this course's being conducive, it is thought that all excitement of this kind is detrimental to health, then it ought to be dispensed with entirely. I forbear expressing an opinion upon this subject now. I merely throw out these few ideas for the consideration of those, who, perhaps, have not thought sufficiently upon this subject.

South Weymouth, Mass., Dec., 1848.

C. C.

INTEREST EXPRESSED.

DR. NEWTON:—*Dear Sir*,—I herewith enclose you \$2.00 for the Journal.

I am glad to perceive, from the Journal and other sources, that your Institution, in all probability, will be well patronized, and that the prospect of obtaining an Act of Incorporation, at the coming session of the Legislature, is quite flattering. May the support and co-operation of the friends of reform, be commensurate with your exertions, and far exceed your most sanguine expectations. That New England has long needed an Institution like yours, there cannot be a doubt; and, if you should not succeed, (of which there is no room for doubt,) then I shall be convinced, that a false estimate has been placed upon the character of New England freemen.

It is a burning shame and a disgrace, that the reformers in the Eastern States have not moved in this matter years ago; and Massachusetts, more particularly, being the scene of the labors of the renowned founder of our System of Practice, should, long since, have founded an Institution where his principles, in their purity, could have been taught, and promulgated to the people.

But I am writing more than I intended, when I commenced. So I will close, by wishing you every success, and that prosperity may crown your labors, and that your patrons and subscribers may increase a thousand fold.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this, and oblige,

Yours in haste,

Paterson, N. J., Dec., 1848.

L. H. BORDEN.

From the Western Medical Reformer and Eclectic Journal.

CEANOTHUS AMERICANUS.*

We publish with pleasure the following communication from Dr. Cooper. Practical papers of this kind often do more for the real improvement of medicine, than learned essays. We hope to hear often from Dr. C., in reference to his peculiar observations and experience with the productions of the forest.

CEANOTHUS AMERICANUS. *Common names—Red Root, New Jersey Tea, Wild Snowball, Bohea, etc.*

It is my intention to bring to the notice of Eclectics the value of this shrub, which, so far as I can ascertain, is unknown, or nearly so, to the profession; but, being only a *practical* Botanist, I shall not attempt to give a *scientific* description of it.

Ceanothus americanus is a shrub from one to four feet in height, according to locality, bearing white flowers, very small, and in clusters, which appear in June and July, in Pennsylvania and New York, Southern Ohio and Indiana, in May. The flower gives place to three cornered seed vessels of a brownish or black color, which remain on the stem all winter. The stems are brown near the earth, and green toward the point—leaves dark green, and much like the leaves of the wild cherry, but are rougher and thicker, though nearly the size of the cherry leaf. Root large, with a red or brown epidermis, containing many small white veins, and tolerably thick—heart of the root red by which it may be known from nearly every other shrub. The bark of the root has the smell and taste of peach-leaves, while the leaves, flowers and young shoots, are without smell, and have a slightly mucilaginous taste.

LOCALITY. This shrub may be found in abundance from the lakes to

* *Ceanothus Americanus*, (New Jersey tea,) leaves ovate acuminate, serrate, three nerved, pubescent beneath; panicles axillary, long peduncles, subcorymbd.—Ed.

Missouri, growing on gravelly or stony hill-sides facing the rising sun. I have also seen much of it growing on the prairies in Illinois and Iowa, and once noticed a stalk or two in the neighborhood of Natchez, Mississippi.

MEDICAL USES. This shrub, (the leaves, flowers and young stems,) in decoction, is regarded as a specific for asthma and consumption by the North-Western Indians, while the bark of the root is highly esteemed by them as a remedy for venereal disease and epilepsy; but I wish to speak of my own experience, or rather experiments with this article. About two years ago I was called upon by Miss Mary Boggs, who had been laboring under chronic bronchitis for several years, during which time she had, frequently, attacks so severe as to entirely prevent her from speaking. She was much emaciated, and was troubled with profuse night-sweats, a constant pain in the throat, and a discharge of thin glairy mucus. This being a very severe case, I thought I would give the ceanothus a fair trial. So I put up a package of the leaves, flowers and stems, ground up together, and directed her to take about half an ounce, to a pint and a half of water, boil down to a pint, and take a wine-glassful four times a day, giving the anti-dyspeptic pill to keep the bowels regular, and elixir vitrol for the night sweats. The result was, a perfect and permanent cure, in six weeks. I have cured several other cases of bronchitis and numerous cases of asthma (mostly children) with the above, alone. In diseases of the lungs, this medicine is particularly valuable; for, when long continued in the form of decoction, (it should always be taken cold,) it promotes expectoration and causes *vomica* of the lungs, to throw off large quantities of matter, and has of itself cured some cases which were considered far advanced in consumption. It will also be found effectual in dropsy, particularly that of the chest. The bark of the root I use in tincture, altogether; and I consider it a diuretic, tonic, and expectorant. The tincture may be made as follows: diluted alcohol or proof spirits half gal., ceanothus americanus bark of root six oz. when dry, or eight when green. The dose is, from a tea-spoonful to a table-spoonful, three or four times a day.

I consider the following almost an infallible remedy for whooping cough:—Tr. ceanothus (bark of root) two ounces, sanguinaria canadensis one ounce, macrotyris racemosa (black cohosh) one ounce, lobelia half an ounce; mix. Dose for a child a year old, fifteen or twenty drops, in cold water sweetened, and gradually increase.

This will be found a first rate cough-drop, but should never be given except in the absence of all inflammatory symptoms. I would like to see it effectually tried, and reported upon by some of the scientific physicians belonging to the Eclectic Medical Institute. An abundance of it could be found, four or five years ago, up Mill-Creek (—I believe that is the name of the creek that empties into the Ohio below Cincinnati)—two or three miles, I having seen it there at that time. The leaves may be gathered at any time during the summer, and should be carefully dried in the shade, frequently turning them to prevent them from moulding. The bark of the root I gather early in the spring, or late in the fall. The proper way, to take the bark off the root, is to wash the roots

clean after being dug, and beat it off with a round piece of wood, or the pole of a hatchet. The bark makes a beautiful deep red tincture.

York, Pa., July, 1847.

JAMES COOPER.

From the Western Medical Reformer and Eclectic Journal.

CEANOTHUS AMERICANUS.

Common Names—Red Root, New Jersey Tea.

Ceanothus americanus is a shrub from one to three feet in height, bearing white flowers in clusters, about the size of clover heads. The shrub is in full bloom from the middle of June to the middle of July. The flower gives place to three cornered seed vessels of a brownish color, which remain on the stem all winter. The stems are brown near the earth, and green toward the top; leaves dark green, nearly the size of the cherry leaf; root large, with a red or brown epidermis, containing many small white veins, and tolerably thick. The heart of the root is red, by which it may be known from nearly every other shrub.

LOCALITY. This shrub may be found in abundance throughout the United States, growing on gravelly or stony hill sides, but is seldom to be found where cattle range.

MEDICAL PROPERTIES. The stems, leaves, seeds, and bark of the root possess astringent, expectorant, and sedative properties.

I will, with pleasure, give a history of my discovery of the *ceanothus americanus*, with my application of this shrub to diseases of the lungs. In 1833, while out botanizing one day, my attention was directed to this shrub, by its beauty while in full bloom, and the peculiar appearance of the root. I gave it the name of wild snowball, knowing no other name for it at that time. I tasted and chewed some of it, and I conceived the idea that it would be good for coughs. I gathered some of the shrub, dried it, and added some of it to my compound, used at that time for coughs. I was successful in treating coughs, but was not aware that the *ceanothus* had added any additional properties to my compound.

I used it in this way for six months, then abandoned the use of it until 1837. When I was practising medicine in Chambersburg, Pa., Benjamin Stuart sent for me. He was laboring under a severe spell of asthma, and had been severely afflicted for three years. His case was the worst I had ever seen. I went to treat his disease with my former mode of treatment, (Indian remedies,) but failed. I then tried Dr. Beach's remedies, but they failed also. I had occupied about three months with Dr. Beach's remedies and the Indian treatment, and was about telling him I could not do any thing more for him, when the *ceanothus* came into my mind, and I resolved to give it a fair trial, without the aid of any other remedy. I cut up the leaves and seeds, and run them through the mill. I gave him a package to last him for about two weeks, and told him to take a large table-spoonful of the ground plant, add one pint and a half of fresh

water, boil down to one pint, and use a pint for a common drink through the day. At the end of two weeks I called on him, and asked him how he was getting along. His reply was, "Doctor, why did you not give me this medicine in the first place; it has nearly cured me."

He complained of vertigo, impaired vision, and a singing noisy sensation in his ears. I suspected that the ceanothus was the cause of this, and my next object was to prevent its having this effect on the eyes and ears. I put up a preparation in which I took two parts of ceanothus, and one part of *asclepias tuberosa*, ground into coarse powder. Mixing the two together, I directed him to take one table-spoonful to one pint and a half of water, boil down to one pint,—give one wine glassful, three times a day, cold, and one of Dr. Beach's anti-dyspeptic pills every night at bed time. This had the desired effect; his eyes got strong, and the disagreeable hissing noise in his ears left him. In about four weeks of this treatment he got entirely well, and has remained well ever since, which has been ten years.

About two weeks after I had cured Mr. Stuart, I was called to see James McCray, who was laboring under a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs. He had a raging fever—was flighty—had an incessant cough, and was spitting blood and purulent matter. He was very low and was not expected to live three days. I commenced my treatment by bathing his feet in warm water—gave Dr. Beach's sweating drops; and, after I had produced perspiration, gave him the following compound: ceanothus, two parts; *asclepias tuberosa*, one part; black pleurisy, one part (Indian remedy). I mixed these three articles together and directed him to take a large table-spoonful to one pint and a half of water, boil down to one pint, give one wine glass full every three hours. This treatment broke the fever, and kept the skin moist. He threw off large quantities of matter from his mouth and nose, for three or four days before it subsided. While in this situation I called in Richard Marrow, Esq., to see him. He shook his head and left the room, beckoned for me to follow, and told me, for God's sake, if I wanted to save my credit, to go back and tell the young man that he must die in less than one day. I told him I had good hopes, and in three weeks I had this young man up and about. He has enjoyed good health ever since.

I have mentioned the names and residence (Chambersburg, Pa.), in order that any person being sceptical on this subject might write to the persons and ascertain the fact.

My treatment for chronic bronchitis, which is universally successful, is as follows: Take ceanothus, one part; blackberry leaves, one part; made into coarse powder. Take a large table-spoonful to one pint and a half of fresh water, boil down to one pint; give a wine-glassful four times in the day, cold, and one of Dr. Beach's anti-dyspeptic pills every night on going to bed. If this treatment is followed up from one to three months, it will prove invariably successful; to the truth of which hundreds could testify. In the case of James P. Afflick, West Philadelphia, a case of pulmonary consumption, five eminent physicians of Philadelphia, had given him up. They sounded his chest, and said one lung was entirely gone. In this situation he applied to me. I made a decoction of two parts ceanothus and one part *asclepias tuberosa*, and ordered one

wine-glassful four times a day, and one of Dr. Beach's anti-dyspeptic pills every night, and two pills every morning, made as follows: May-apple root (*podophyllum peltatum*), two parts; skunk cabbage root (*dracontium*), one part; blood root (*sanguinaria canadensis*), half a part; lobelia herb, one fourth part. Pulverize and mix—form into pills, with molasses, of common size.

In three months I had Mr. Afflick entirely well. In addition to the above treatment, if there be night sweats, I give twenty-five drops elixir vitrol, in a wine-glassful of fresh water, every night, till the sweat abates. The treatment I have mentioned in James P. Afflick's case is the treatment I universally follow in cases of pulmonary consumption, except with those who think medicine given in the form of decoction is too simple to have any effect. In such cases I keep a syrup to suit. It is made as follows: Take ceanothus two parts, *asclepias tuberosa* one part, boil down till you have a very strong decoction; strain, and add refined sugar, and boil down to form a thick syrup; add the tincture of Tolu, to give a flavor, and bottle. Dose—one tablespoonful three times a day.

This syrup is a substitute for the decoction, but the best effects are produced from the decoction. I suppose it is the sugar that prevents the syrup from having so good an effect.

The following syrup is almost an infallible remedy for the whooping cough: Take ceanothus, two parts, *asclepias tuberosa*, one part; make a strong decoction; strain, add refined sugar, boil down to a thick syrup; and, to every quart of syrup, while warm, add half a pint of the tincture of *macrotyrs racemosa*, and a sufficient quantity of the tincture of Tolu, to give a flavor. Dose, for a child one year old, a small teaspoonful three times a day.

In the fall of 1846, George Harris applied to me. I found that his lungs and liver were considerably affected. Harris had been under the treatment of Dr. Rose, who had failed with his remedies; and, when he applied to me, I thought I would try an experiment in his case; and, if I found that I was not likely to succeed, I would quit and take up my former plan. I made a pill composed of equal parts of ceanothus, (bark of the root) and the compound above mentioned of *podophyllum*, *dracontium*, *sanguinaria*, and lobelia. I gave two pills four times a day, and gave no other medicine. In three months I had cured him thoroughly, and at this time he is as able-bodied a man as you would find in a hundred.

From fifteen gallons of a strong decoction of the *ceanothus americanus* boiled down to an extract, I obtained about one quart of extract. It had such an astringent taste that I was afraid to use it in diseases of the chest.

In conclusion, I would say, I do not think there ever was a remedy equal to the ceanothus in diseases of the lungs; and, if you or any of the Faculty will give it a fair trial, as I have directed, you will find the most happy results. It is the champion of the vegetable kingdom for diseases of the lungs; but in their treatment it should not be used to any extent, unless in combination with other medicines.

Philadelphia, Sept. 7th, 1747.

J. W. COOPER.

DR. CURTIS' WITHDRAWMENT.

Our readers will recollect, that, in announcing, some time since, Dr. Curtis' acceptance of the Professorship of Theory and Practice in our College, we said, that that acceptance was conditional;—it depended on the question whether the friends in New England would be sufficiently united in expressions of their wishes in favor of the measure. We regret to say, that Dr. C. has not found these expressions and the general manifestation of interest satisfactory. In a letter to us of a recent date, he says, "I was informed, last winter, that, in Connecticut very extensively, and to some extent in New Hampshire, and in all the other Eastern States, there was a strong desire for me to give a course or more of Lectures on Theory and Practice in New England. Well; I gave them an opportunity, but very few embraced it." The doctor does not see sufficient reason to think, that the interest in his behalf now is any greater than it was last year; and, as the Boston movement was a failure, he chooses to leave New England reformers to carry out for themselves their own measures.

We are well aware, that it would be a personal sacrifice to Dr. Curtis to discharge the duties of the office to which he had been invited. Still, we had hoped, that he would have been willing to make that sacrifice, and that we should have been pleasantly associated in the work of promoting a common object. As, however, he has determined to decline this service, we will only say, we will yet labor harmoniously in the same cause, though, like Abraham and Lot of old, one goes to the right hand and the other to the left. [Ed. Jour.]

From the Botanico-Medical Recorder.

LIFE PRESERVER.

A new kind of life preserver has been brought forward in New York, the inventors of which claim for it the following advantages:

"A person wearing one of these life preservers can carry from fifty to one hundred lbs. in addition to his person, and float four persons in the water, without sinking, and can take no other position on the water, except with the head and shoulders entirely above the water.

"The entire person, save the face, is enclosed by an India rubber dress, parts of which are inflated, enabling the wearer to float in an erect, or sleep in a reclining posture; or, with paddles which are attached, a person can move at the rate of three miles per hour."